

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 XMB-02
TRSE-00 /036 W
-----001804 070703Z /17
R 070622Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7554

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1067

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, ET
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SEEKS BOEING 727

1. AT RECENT U.S. EMBASSY RECEPTION, ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES (EAL)
GEN. MGR., BRIG. GEN. TAFESSE, INDICATED EAL IS IN THE MARKET FOR TWO
BOEING
727'S IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AND POSSIBLY ADDITIONAL AIRPLANES (AS
LARGE AS 747'S) LATER ON. BGEN TAFESSE NOTED THAT EAL WOULD
NEED FINANCING, ADDING THAT REPS OF THE AIRLINES HAD ALREADY
VISITED EXIM IN WASHDC TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

2. BGEN TAFESSE HAS REQUESTED APPOINTMENT WITH CHARGE AT
1500 ON MAR 7, THE SUBJECT OF WHICH MAY WELL BE CONTEMPLATED
AIRCRAFT PURCHASES.

3. EMB WOULD APPRECIATE ASAP EXIM COMMENTS ON THEIR RECENT
MEETINGS WITH EAL OFFICIALS.

4. COMMENT: EMB APPREHENSIVE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS SHOULD
EXPECTED EAL REQUEST TO BUY U.S. CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT BE DENIED. THIS
CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE DENIAL STEMS FROM RECENT DENIAL U.S. EXPORT
LICENSE FOR CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT TO LIBYA, AND FROM ROLE OF EAL IN
ETHIOPIAN WAR EFFORT, WHICH COULD CAUSE HUE AND CRY IN SOME
WASHDC CIRCLES. EMB ENCOURAGES FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION
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BE GIVEN TO SALE OF 727'S TO EAL ON BASIS (1) ITS LONG AND HAPPY
TIES WITH BOEING AND U.S. AVIATION CIRCLES, (2) EXCELLENT
REPUTATION EAL AS BOTH OPERATOR AND DEBTOR, (3) MAINTENANCE
U.S. INFLUENCE IN SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA, AND (4) CONTRIBUTION
TO U.S. EXPORT EFFORTS.

RECENT PROGRESS ETHIOPIAN ARMED FORCES GIVES EVERY INDICATION THAT

PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF 727'S WOULD NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN
TIME TO HAVE ANY BEARING ON ETHIOPIAN WAR EFFORT IN THE OGADEN
WHICH IN ANY CASE HAS BEEN TO DATE PURELY DEFENSIVE IN CHARACTER.
MATHERON

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Message Attributes

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